



MEETING OF THE

WATER POLICY TASK FORCE

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Ventura County: Linda Parks, Ventura County • Glen Becerra, Simi Valley • Carl Morehouse, San Buenaventura • Toni Young, Port Hueneme

Orange County Transportation Authority: Art Brown, Buena Park

Riverside County Transportation Commission: Robin Lowe, Hemet

Ventura County Transportation Commission: Keith Millhouse, Moorpark

Thursday, February 28, 2008

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

SCAG Offices

**818 West 7th Street, 12th Floor
San Bernardino Conference Room
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213.236.1800**

If members of the public wish to review the attachments or have any questions on any of the agenda items, please contact Dan Griset at 213.236.1895 or griset@scag.ca.gov

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Agenda
WATER POLICY TASK FORCE
February 28, 2008
Conference Room – San Bernardino A&B

Page #

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Members of the public desiring to speak on an agenda item or another item, but within the purview of this Task Force, must notify staff to the Task Force prior to the meeting. At the discretion of the Chair public comments may be limited to three minutes.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action Minutes for the November 29, 2007 meeting will be available at the meeting and posted on the Task Force website (<http://scag.ca.gov/wptf>).

4.0 PRESENTATION ITEMS FOR THE TASK FORCE

4.1 Alluvial Fan Task Force Update 3

Susan Lien Longville, Director of the Water Resources Institute at California State University, San Bernardino, will report on the progress being made by the Alluvial Fan Task Force recently appointed by Lester Snow, Director of the Department of Water Resources.

4.2 A New State Watershed Program in the Making 5

Belinda Faustinos, Executive Director of the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, is seeking guidance from the Task Force on the development of a new statewide Watershed Program that will promote and conduct effective stewardship of natural resources within the context of watersheds throughout California.

4.3 A Regional Plan for Allocating Future Imported Water Shortages 7

Jennifer Nevills, in the Water Resource Management Group at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, will brief the Task Force on a recently adopted plan by the Board of the District for allocating possible future imported water shortages to wholesale water agencies within southern California.

4.4 Orange County's Groundwater Replenishment System 9

Shivaji Deshmukh, Program Manager with the Orange County Water District, will update the Task Force on the recent start up of what is now the largest water purification and reuse facility in the world.

4.5 SCAG Policy Concept Paper Update: Regional Comprehensive Planning and the Blueprint Initiative 11

Staff seeks Task Force feedback on a revised policy concept paper that is oriented to SCAG's interest in the Blueprint planning initiative led by Caltrans and the California Resources Agency.

5.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

6.0 STAFF REPORT

7.0 TASK FORCE INFORMATION SHARING

8.0 COMMENT PERIOD

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The next Task Force meeting will be held on April 24, 2008 at the SCAG offices.

MEMO

DATE: November 29, 2007

TO: Water Policy Task Force

FROM: Daniel E. Griset, Program Manager, 213.236.1895, griset@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Alluvial Fan Task Force Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive for future policy consideration.

BACKGROUND:

The Alluvial Fan Task Force (AFTF) has been appointed by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to address issues related to unique flood hazards associated with the rapid rate of development on alluvial fans. Task Force members (shown below) include federal, state, and local floodplain management officials, city, and county representatives, and stakeholders with development, construction, and environmental interests. Funding for the task force has been provided by FEMA under the Pre-Mitigation Disaster Planning Grant Program with a 25 percent match from DWR.

The principle hazards associated with alluvial fan flooding at the base of mountains are high-velocity, debris-laden flows resulting from a series of storms, particularly following wildfires common in semiarid regions. Alluvial fans are most prevalent in San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Orange, Imperial, and San Diego counties.

The task force is charged with reviewing the state of knowledge of alluvial fan flooding and developing a Model Ordinance that will reduce long-term flood damages on alluvial fans and provide land use guidelines for development on alluvial fans. The ordinance, to be developed collaboratively by AFTF members under the guidance of a professional facilitator, is intended for voluntary adoption by local governments.

Findings of the AFTF will be reported to the Legislature and released to the public. In addition to developing recommendations and the Model Ordinance, AFTF products will include GIS maps of alluvial fans, videotaped educational presentations, briefing memos, academic literature references, and technical reports.

The AFTF held its second meeting on Friday, January 4, 2008, hosted by San Diego County Supervisor Bill Horn at La Casa del Zorro Resort in Borrego Springs. Future Task Force meetings are planned in communities most affected by rapid growth on alluvial fans as projected by local governments to occur through 2030. The schedule and themes of these future meetings: March 14 (Best Management

Practices on Developed Alluvial Fans), April 11 (Outline for Planning Guidelines and Model Ordinance), May 16 (Continued Discussion of Planning Guidelines and Model Ordinance) and June 6 (Finalize Task Force Recommendations).

Members of the AFTF:

San Bernardino County Supervisor Paul Biane
Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley
Kern County Supervisor John McQuiston
San Diego County Supervisor Bill Horn
Los Angeles Supervisor Michael Antonovich
Mark Pisano representing SCAG Regional Council President Gary Ovitt
Mike Fox for Director Vana Olson San Bernardino County Flood Control District
Dusty Williams, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
Geoff Owu, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
Rick Iger, Kern County Water Agency
Georgia Celehar, Coachella Valley Water District/Flood Control District
Christine Sloan, San Diego County Watershed Planning and Land Use
Sergio Vargas, Ventura County Public Works
Ali Sahabi, SCE Corporation
Paul Quail, Innovative Land Concepts
Dave Mlynarski, MAPCO
Dale Casey, Standard Pacific Homes
Mark Grey, Director of Environmental Affairs, BIA of Southern California
Tom Davis, Agua Caliente Band of Desert Cahuilla, Development Officer
Chairman Ray Torres, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Duane Young, D Young and Sons (agriculture)
Tom Scott, Riverside Land Conservancy
Joan Taylor, Governor's appointee to Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, Sierra Club
Dr. Norman Meek, Environmental Studies/Safe Development
Dr. Stephanie Pincetl, Planning and Conservation League, (Institute for the Environment)
Kathleen Webb, State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
Tom O'Keefe, San Bernardino Unit Chief, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Marty Teal, Floodplain Managers Association representative
Ralph Wagner, long-term Flood Control District Commissioner and Engineer
Eric Shamp, American Planning Association, Institutional Architect
Scott Steinmetz, Underwriter/Risk Analyst, Fireman's Fund Insurance
Lee Reeder, Inland Empire WATERKEEPER, Associate Director & Waterkeeper
John McCarthy, Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California (CELSOC)

FISCAL IMPACT:

The consideration of this topic creates no fiscal impact on SCAG. Staff support for the Water Policy Task Force is funded through work elements in the OWP (Environmental Planning and the Regional Comprehensive Plan).

REPORT

DATE: December 6, 2007

TO: Water Policy Task Force

FROM: Daniel E. Griset, Program Manager, 213.236.1895, griset@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: A New State Watershed Program in the Making

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Provide feedback to the Program's Advisory Committee on the Draft Watershed Program Principles.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of the Watershed Program is to advance sustainable watershed-based management of California's natural resources through community-based strategies. It is an extension of the previous CALFED Bay-Delta Watershed Program that will be administered through the Department of Conservation. The Program will operate with guiding principles and goals and objectives, that includes maintaining a commitment to public involvement and Program transparency. Facilitating the development of this new initiative is a Public Advisory Committee, a group including Belinda Faustinos, Martha Davis and Dee Zinke from the SCAG region.

The Committee has drafted principles to guide the Watershed Program's outreach, development and implementation. Feedback from the Task Force is being sought on these principles and on other issues of moment within the SCAG region.

These draft Principles include:

- **Public involvement** will include broad participation from varying interests involved with natural resource management.
- Promote and support a **multi-objective approach to managing the State's watersheds** that recognizes the inter-relationships among biological, physical, sociological and economic elements of watershed systems.
- Information regarding decisions made and actions taken by the Program will be **transparent** and will be readily available to interested stakeholders.
- Actions and functions of the Program will be **goal-oriented**, and intended to improve the management and the conditions in the State's watershed systems relative to desired conditions.
- The Program will seek to increase the use of **scientifically valid** concepts and information. The decisions and policies developed by the Program will integrate scientific and local knowledge into Program activities.

- Management of the Program will track and use **performance based** information and data to adaptively manage the Program to best achieve Program goals and purpose.
- **Integrate relevant state, regional and local goals** and provide support to better correlate local actions and goals and the State's actions.

A "Program Development Outline" is available at:

[http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wp/Documents/PROGRAM%20DEVELOPMENT%20OUTLINE v5.pdf](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wp/Documents/PROGRAM%20DEVELOPMENT%20OUTLINE%20v5.pdf)

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MEMO

DATE: November 29, 2007

TO: Water Policy Task Force

FROM: Daniel E. Griset, Program Manager, 213.236.1895, griset@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: A Regional Plan for Allocating Future Imported Water Shortages

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive for future policy consideration.

BACKGROUND:

The prospect of future imported water shortages for the SCAG region and other parts of southern California has resulted in the adoption of a Water Supply Allocation Plan by the Board of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD). These potential future shortages reflect growing concerns about the impacts of climate change in the Colorado River Basin and the Sierra Nevada mountains, along with the impact of a looming reduction of State Water Project pumping out of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta caused by court rulings over endangered species in the Delta.

This Plan has been in the making since July 2007 with cooperative planning among MWD's member agencies to develop an allocation formula and implementation measures should a water shortage occur. This resulted in a Plan that includes specific formulas for calculating member agency supply allocations and the key implementation elements needed for administering an allocation. Ultimately, this Plan is intended to provide the basis for the urban water shortage contingency analysis required under Water Code Section 10631 and will be incorporated into an update of MWD's Regional Urban Water Management Plan (RUWMP).

The preparation of this Plan drew on the principles of an earlier 1999 Water Surplus and Drought Management Plan (WSDM) that considered supply limitations that would result from an extended drought. The WSDM Plan included a guiding principle to be followed in developing any future allocation scheme:

"Metropolitan will encourage storage of water during periods of surplus and work jointly with its Member Agencies to minimize the impacts of water shortages on the region's retail consumers and economy during periods of shortage."¹

This principle reflected a commitment to allocation schemes that would be both equitable and would minimize regional hardship. Key allocation considerations in this earlier Plan included the following:

- The impact on retail customers and the economy
- Allowance for population and growth

- Change and/or loss of local supply
- Reclamation/Recycling
 - Conservation
 - Investment in local resources
 - Participation in Metropolitan's non-firm (interruptible) programs
 - Investment in Metropolitan's facilities

Supply Allocation Methodology and Implementation Elements of the New Plan

In general, the *methodology* follows these steps:

1. Determine an agency's need for wholesale water supplies by using a historical Base Period and adjusting for growth and changes in local supplies.
2. Provide an across-the-board allocation of wholesale supplies based on the declared regional shortage of water.
3. Provide an additional allocation of supplies based on the agency's dependence on Metropolitan supplies to account for disparate retail level impacts (only in shortages greater than 10 percent).
4. Provide an additional credit reflective of the amount of conservation savings established within the member agency and on the estimated retail level shortage being experienced by the member agency.

Once the allocations are set for each agency for a given year, the following *implementation* elements would apply:

- A supply allocation level would be declared by a board action through the Water Planning and Stewardship Committee at the April Board meeting.
- The supply allocation level would be in place for a twelve month period from July through the following June.
- A penalty will be used to enforce the allocations, with all accrued penalties collected at the end of the allocation year under the water rate schedules in effect at that time.

The results of the Plan, as described in various scenarios, will be presented at the meeting. A newspaper article from the Los Angeles Times is shown in the attachments section of the Agenda, page 18.

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MEMO

DATE: February 28, 2008

TO: Water Policy Task Force

FROM: Daniel E. Griset, Program Manager, 213.236.1895, griset@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Orange County's Groundwater Replenishment System

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive for future policy consideration.

BACKGROUND:

The Orange County Groundwater Replenishment System has evolved and changed over time as new goals, data, regulations and facts have been identified. Through this process, however, the needs and benefits of the project have remained constant:

- Orange County needs more reliable, high-quality water in the future to replenish the groundwater basin, to protect the groundwater basin from seawater intrusion, and for industrial uses
- The Groundwater Replenishment System reduces the amount of treated wastewater released into the ocean and delays the need for another ocean outfall
- The Groundwater Replenishment System decreases Orange County's reliance on imported water from northern California and the Colorado River
- The Groundwater Replenishment System's locally-controlled water helps drought-proof Orange County
- The Groundwater Replenishment System's new water will help meet statewide water objectives
- The Groundwater Replenishment System helps reduce mineral build up in Orange County's groundwater by providing a new source of ultra-pure water to blend with other sources, including imported water.

Water for Orange County Families

The project will help prevent predicted water shortages in the future. The first phase plans to produce approximately 72,000 acre-feet of water per year. The project can be expanded in future years. One acre-foot of water is 326,000 gallons or enough water to supply the needs of two Orange County families for a year.

Reduces Amount of Sewer Water Currently Discharged to the Ocean

The project will take highly treated sewer water and treat it to beyond drinking water standards using advanced membrane purification facilities to be constructed in Fountain Valley. The water will be used to expand an existing underground seawater intrusion barrier. The water will be injected along the coast. The project will make use of more than 25 years of water purification experience began in 1975 with Water Factory 21.

Drought-Proof, High-Quality Water

The Groundwater Replenishment System will provide a new drought-proof water source for north and central Orange County, reducing reliance on imported water. Additionally, the Groundwater Replenishment System will save additional funds in the future by improving the quality of the water in the Orange County groundwater basin. This water quality improvement takes place when the new purified water, low in minerals, mixes with existing groundwater, lowering the average mineral content of Orange County's water. Lowering the amount of minerals in the water or reducing water hardness will decrease maintenance costs for Orange County's residents and businesses by extending the life of water heaters, boilers, cooling towers and plumbing fixtures.

State of the Art Technology

The previously treated sewer water will undergo an advanced treatment process that includes two membrane filtration systems - microfiltration and reverse osmosis disinfection and treatment by ultraviolet light and hydrogen peroxide. Once purified, the water will be sent to recharge facilities or injection wells. The newly purified water will seep into the ground, like rain, and blend with groundwater.

- Microfiltration
Microfiltration is a low-pressure membrane filtration process that takes small suspended particles, bacteria and other materials out of the water. MF provides the most efficient preparation of water for reverse osmosis. MF is used in commercial industries to process food, fruit juices and soda beverages; in computer chip manufacturing; and to sterilize medicines that cannot be heated.
- Reverse Osmosis (RO)
Reverse osmosis is a high-pressure membrane filtration process that forces water through the molecular structure of several sheets of thin plastic membranes to filter out minerals and contaminants, including salts, viruses, pesticides, and other materials. The RO membranes are like microscopic strainers - bacteria and viruses, as well as inorganic and most organic molecules cannot pass through the membranes.
- Ultra Violet (UV) Light and Hydrogen Peroxide Treatment
During ultraviolet disinfection, water is exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light, just like the instruments in medical and dental offices, to provide disinfection. Additionally, ultraviolet light combined with hydrogen peroxide creates an advanced oxidation reaction that eliminates any remaining compounds in water by breaking them down in harmless compounds like carbon dioxide and water. This multiple barrier process creates an ultra-pure quality water.

Additional information (a Q&A on the System) is attached at the back of the Agenda, page 14.

FISCAL IMPACT:

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REPORT

DATE: February 28, 2008

TO: Water Policy Task Force

FROM: Daniel E. Griset, Program Manager, 213.236.1895, griset@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure and Growth Planning Policy and Strategy

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Provide staff with feedback on the revised draft policy concept paper that supports the need for comprehensive regional Blueprint planning statewide.

BACKGROUND:

The key idea presented by this policy concept paper is the need for a planning framework that provides California regions with the tools and resources to do the kind of comprehensive, integrated planning that can be used to better guide continuing regional growth towards more sustainable futures and community success. Though some infrastructure efforts recognize the need for greater integration of planning and implementation within watershed and other larger-scale areas, these advances do not address the overall growth challenges and the need for new approaches to better guide infrastructure financing and project selection and implementation.

The climate change challenge with its new requirement to reduce the “carbon footprint” of human activities everywhere in California is another compelling reason for more comprehensive regional *Blueprint* planning (for additional background see www.calblueprint.dot.ca.gov). Without a wide-ranging consideration of the interrelationship between the activities of living, work, mobility, recreation and other realities of urban life, the prospects for reducing greenhouse gasses are very limited.

Current funding practices typically evaluate competing projects by comparing the cost-benefit ratios for each project, measuring the outputs as a way of setting priorities. By contrast, the comprehensive approach the paper recommends would measure outcomes as a new way of setting priorities. Outcomes consider a broad range of inputs, not simply the outputs of one project. Accordingly, investments within a comprehensive *Blueprint* framework can be directed to regional and local projects that go farther to reach the overall goals of a watershed or larger-scale planning and management area. The shift is from a piecemeal or silo-based approach to one that is much more holistic and integrated.

A more holistic approach recognizes a mix of the elements that must be aligned for better regional outcomes. The elements include transportation infrastructure, air quality resources, land use planning, economic development, open space protection, and solid waste and water resources management. Some of these elements are planned within political jurisdictions while others are defined by basins or watersheds. These variations suggest the need for a new framework in which comprehensive regional and local planning and implementation can be done.

As with SCAG's other mandated planning efforts, performance-based outcomes are an important tool to ensure effective implementation. Performance outcomes can avoid the one-project-at-a-time syndrome that has characterized growth and resources management in the past. A performance-based plan requires that certain system-wide goals be achieved, and within that framework projects can be selected based on their contribution toward those goals. Performance outcomes also allow flexibility in project criteria and management, as progress toward the goals is monitored and program requirements are adjusted as necessary.

"Planning and California's Future: Getting into the Bigger Picture of Growth, Resources and Sustainability" can be seen at <http://www.scag.ca.gov/wptf/pdfs/PlanningAndCalifornia'sFuture.pdf>

FISCAL IMPACT:

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ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Q&A on the Groundwater Replenishment System**
- 2. Newspaper Coverage of MWD Shortage Allocation Plan**

Q&A on the Groundwater Replenishment System

Q: What is the Groundwater Replenishment System?

A: The Groundwater Replenishment (GWR) System is the largest water purification project of its kind in the world and will help increase Orange County's water independence by providing a locally controlled, drought-proof supply of safe, very high-quality water. The GWR System takes highly treated sewer water and purifies it to near-distilled quality using state-of-the-art technology.

When completed and fully operational, the GWR System will generate enough pure water to meet the needs of 144,000 families. GWR System water will exceed all state and federal drinking water standards and have water quality similar to, or better than, bottled water.

Q: What happens to the purified water?

A: Most of the purified water eventually ends up in the drinking water aquifer beneath north and central Orange County, but it gets there through two different routes. Roughly half of the purified water from the GWR System will be injected into Orange County's expanded seawater intrusion barrier. The remaining water will be piped to percolation basins, or large lakes, in Anaheim, California, where the water will take the natural path of rainwater as it filters through clay, sand and rock down to the groundwater aquifer. There the water blends with the existing groundwater before it is used as a source of drinking water for north and central Orange County residents.

Q: What is a seawater intrusion barrier?

A: The seawater intrusion barrier is a mound of purified water injected under pressure along the western boundary of Orange County's groundwater basin. Because the basin is naturally connected to the ocean, this dam of pressurized pure water prevents saltwater from contaminating Orange County's groundwater.

The original seawater intrusion barrier was built in the 1970s and the GWR System predecessor, world-famous Water Factory 21, provided the purified water that was injected into the groundwater basin. The original system of injection and monitoring wells that was part of Water Factory 21 is being expanded as part of the GWR System project in order to provide added protection from saltwater intrusion.

Q: How is the GWR System environmentally responsible?

A: It uses a valuable and increasingly more taxed resource—water. Not only does the GWR System provide a reliable, drought-proof source of pure water for Orange County, it will reduce saltwater pollution into Orange County's groundwater basin and reduce the amount of wastewater discharged to the ocean. In fact, it reduces the amount of wastewater discharged to the ocean so much that it will delay, possibly indefinitely, the need to build another ocean outfall pipe.

A number of environmental groups, including the Surfrider Foundation, Orange County Coastkeeper, Sierra Club, Association of Environmental Professionals and Earth Resource Foundation are in support of the project. The GWR System is also a 2004 Flex Your Power efficiency award winner.

Q: Where is the GWR System being built?

A: Under construction since 2003 and planned since 1994, the GWR System consists of three major components: the Advanced Water Purification Facility (AWPF), a 13-mile pipeline connecting the AWPF to OCWD's groundwater recharge basins, and the expansion of the existing seawater intrusion barrier with additional injection and monitoring wells.

The AWPF is being built on an existing water campus in Fountain Valley, Calif. The pipeline will be placed in the west levee of the Santa Ana River between Fountain Valley and Anaheim, Calif. Pipeline construction is occurring in Anaheim, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Orange and Santa Ana. New injection and monitoring wells are under construction in the cities of Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach and Anaheim.

Q: What if we need more water?

A: Another benefit of the GWR System is that, if needed, it can be expanded in future years.

Q: What about desalination?

A: Desalinated water costs range anywhere from \$800 to \$2,000 per acre-foot to produce, while the GWR System can produce purified water for approximate \$525 per acre-foot. Still, desalination will be a source of new water in areas where it can provide a backup supply of water to enhance reliability.

The GWR System and desalination efforts will complement each other. The reality is that Southern California's water future is not in the hands of one project or one technology. It will require a combination of many local and regional water projects, with efforts by all water agencies in Orange County and Southern California to meet future water needs.

Q: How much will the GWR System cost?

A: It is estimated that it will cost \$487 million to build the first phase of the project (enough water for 144,000 Orange County families.)

Q: Who will pay for the GWR System?

A: A mix of federal, state and local funding is being used. Grants of \$92.5 million have been secured, which includes \$37 million from the State Water Bond (Proposition 13) approved by California voters in 2000, plus \$30 million from the California Department of Water Resources, \$20 million from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and \$5 million from the State Water Resources Control Board awarded in 2002. The California Energy Commission, Environmental Protection Agency and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California have granted additional funds.

The California Energy Commission provided a \$700,000 grant for the GWR System because it can produce purified water using one-half the energy required to transport water from Northern California to Southern California. Other grants and funding are also being sought.

Additionally, in 2007, OCWD will begin receiving an annual subsidy of \$3.7 million for 23 years from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), which will help bring down the

operating costs of the GWR System. The financial incentives lower the cost of water to approximately \$525 per acre-foot, which is less than the current cost of imported water.

Q: Will the water be safe?

A: Absolutely. In fact, a separate, independent water quality study indicated that this new purified water will be the safest water available to Orange County from any source. The water will be purified to beyond bottled water quality, better than state and federal drinking water standards.

Q: How do you know the purification process will work?

A: OCWD experts have been testing the water purification technologies used in the GWR System for approximately 10 years. These same technologies are being used by water agencies around the globe.

Today, a five million gallon per day plant, GWR System Phase One, a smaller scale version of the GWR System's AWPf, is sending purified water into the seawater intrusion barrier. It uses the same state-of-the-art, three-step process as the larger AWPf, which will produce 70 million gallons of purified water per day. GWR System Phase One and the AWPf water purification processes have been approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Health Services.

The reality is water purification and reuse is not new. For the past 30 years, people have been drinking some reclaimed water that has been blended into our natural sources of drinking water supplies. Every major body of water in the nation contains some amount of purified wastewater.

OCWD is a worldwide leader in groundwater management, seawater intrusion, water purification and reuse. Water Factory 21, which was recently demolished to make way for the GWR System, was the global example for innovative water purification and groundwater recharge for nearly three decades.

The GWR System will serve as a model for future water purification and coastal groundwater management, just as Water Factory 21 did for almost 30 years. In fact, the GWR System has already been replicated in Singapore, and other parts of the world are looking at GWR System technologies to satisfy their water needs.

Q: Who makes sure the water is safe?

A: The GWR System must be reviewed, approved and permitted by the California Department of Health Services and California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana River Basin to ensure public health, water quality and environmental compliance. The permits require continuous water quality sampling and testing, and reporting on daily, weekly and monthly schedules. If the water does not meet water quality requirements, the plant can be immediately shut down.

Q: How would the GWR System help in a drought?

A: Because purified water from the GWR System will be available regardless of a drought, it will act as a countermeasure against droughts, providing Orange County with a drought-proof supply of high-

quality, pure water. The GWR System helps improve management of the groundwater basin because it produces water during the peak periods of summer months when water to replenish it may be limited.

Water board approves drought plan

Officials in southeastern L.A. County suggest that they might challenge the decision, saying it would penalize low-income residents.

By Deborah Schoch, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer
February 13, 2008

The Metropolitan Water District board Tuesday approved a much-disputed drought plan despite protests from officials in some southeastern Los Angeles County cities who complained that low-income residents would be penalized with higher rates.

Using a weighted voting system that is keyed to property valuation and not population, the 37-member board voted 176,523 to 14,265 to support the plan.

The cities of Los Angeles and San Diego and the Municipal Water District of Orange County were among those voting for the plan after a brief discussion.

"No" votes were cast by Long Beach and the Commerce-based Central Basin Municipal Water District, which serves 2 million people in cities along the Long Beach and San Gabriel River freeway corridors. They suggested that they might challenge the vote in court.

The cities of Commerce, Huntington Park, Norwalk and South Gate and four state legislators had asked for a 60-day delay so that local officials could study the plan's effect more closely.

Southeastern Los Angeles County cities could be hit with \$37.2 million in penalties within a 12-month period, Assemblyman Hector de la Torre (D-South Gate) -- chairman of the Assembly Rules Committee-- wrote in a letter Friday to MWD board Chairman Timothy Brick.

"The plan, while intending to conserve water during shortages, ultimately provides those who can afford to pay the steep penalties with as much water as they want, and places severe financial hardship on ratepayers who cannot afford the high price of water," De la Torre wrote.

South Gate Mayor W.H. DeWitt and Signal Hill Councilman Larry Forester spoke to the board Monday in favor of a 60-day postponement.

Los Angeles and San Diego officials have strongly backed the plan, and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa described it Monday as "the most fair and equitable option I have seen for dealing with a possible water shortage." Orange County officials supported it after requesting a softening of the penalty rate structure.

MWD General Manager Jeff Kightlinger defended the decision not to delay the vote.

"We've sat and worked with folks for eight months," he said. "The plan does not treat anyone disproportionately. . . . It's time to move on and address the more important issues."

If current water shortages worsen, the plan would determine the amount of imported water that the MWD would deliver to its 26 member cities and districts serving 18 million people in six counties.